

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
EASTERN DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.)
)
SIDARTH CHAKRAVERTY-1,)
VICTOR ALSTON -2, and)
SHIJING CAO-3)

Case No. 4:24CR489 MTS/SPM

Defendant.

ORDER

All pretrial matters in the above-referenced case have been referred to the undersigned United States Magistrate Judge pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b). On November 22, 2024, this matter came before the undersigned United States Magistrate Judge for a hearing on the United States’ Motion for Inquiry into Potential for Conflict of Interest (ECF No. 19). The parties briefed the issues giving rise to the potential conflict prior to the hearing. *See* ECF Nos. 60, 66, 70-1 & 75.

Based on the parties’ written submissions and based on the record made at the hearing in open court and *in camera*, the Court finds that additional testimony is needed before this Court can determine whether Attorney Beau Brindley has a disqualifying conflict of interest arising from his successive representation of Defendant Cao, her co-defendant, Victor Alston, and four potential Government

witnesses. Specifically, the undersigned finds that testimony from Jeff Mckay, Hilary Thornton, Doris Ruan, Sandy Boxerman, and Ryan Hedges will aid the court in resolving the conflict issue. To the extent any of these individuals are potential government witnesses, the Court will appoint conflict-free counsel to represent them during the inquiry. Given the sensitive nature of the subject-matter, the inquiry will be conducted *in camera*. However, counsel for Defendant Cao and counsel for the Government will have an opportunity to submit written questions to be asked of each witness.

Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the undersigned will hold a Supplemental Conflict Inquiry in **Courtroom 13 South** on **December 17, 2024, at 9:30 AM**. The Court directs counsel for the United States, Hal Goldsmith, and Defendant Cao's conflict counsel, Teneil Kellerman, to arrange for the appearances of the witnesses named in this order. Defendant Cao, her attorneys (conflict and trial), and counsel for the United States must attend.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that no later than **December 10, 2024**, counsel for Defendant Cao and the United States may submit written questions to be asked of witnesses during the inquiry.

Dated: December 2, 2024.



SHIRLEY PADMORE MENSAH
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE